

# **Minutes of initial/investigative fire districts consolidation meeting between the North Cumberland Fire and Cumberland Fire Districts**

**Date: April 11, 2006**

**Time: 7 PM**

**Place: Arnold Mills School House**

**Purpose: Investigate the possibility of district consolidation ( North  
Cumberland/Cumberland Fire Districts)**

**NCFD Commissioner Paul Lindquist and CFD Board Chairman,  
Marcel Bacon, co-chaired the meeting, others on Investigation  
Committee include:**

<b>Edward LaBlanc- Chairman, NCFD</b>	<b>Chief John</b>
<b>Walsh- Chief, CFD</b>	
<b>Matthew Gannon- Commissioner, NCFD</b>	<b>Firefighter</b>
<b>Jeff McCabe - CFD Local President</b>	
<b>Chief Rene Gendreau- Chief, NCFD</b>	
<b>Lt. Emerson- Local 2722 President</b>	
<b>Firefighter Bernardo- member Local</b>	

**Meeting opened at 7:10 PM with welcome by Commission Lindquist,  
followed by introductions of NCFD members and then Chairman  
Bacon introduced CFD members.**

**Chairman Bacon proceeds to explain the desire of the CFD to  
consolidate and indicated a committee had been formed some time**

**ago to inquire with other Fire Districts in the Town of Cumberland as to who might want to investigate a merger.**

**Chairman LeBlanc expressed the need for goals and benefits, something that was not developed in the recent Town merger talks, benefits to include financial and the need to develop costs to the taxpayer.**

**Chief Gendreau then expressed that a one department/consolidated district would lead to:**

- 1. Standardization**
- 2. Coordination**
- 3. One employee contract**
- 4. One finance committee**

**Chief Walsh stated:**

- 1. Merging is not new to us, we has seen numerous studies on a Town wide merger**
- 2. Merger will enhance safety and improve moral, potentially leading to greater service and better delivered product**

**Chief Gendreau also stated that with a combined fire service, this would allow for more specialization.**

**Lt. Emerson expressed concern about retention of jobs, needed more info on this and believed a merged district would make work safer.**

**Firefighter Jeff McCabe expressed that the Cumberland Fire Department Local is in favor of a merger, also concerned about jobs, and believed a merger would mean a safer work environment.**

**Commissioner Lindquist then asked about the next step-Chairman LeBlanc suggested that a Finance and Personnel committees be formed as an investigative step, Finance to review both districts budgets, financial positions; Personnel, to review any and all labor contracts. So agreed.**

**A suggestion was made to review the Action Plan of the Coventry Central Fire District as they just completed a merger of 4 districts into one. Copies of that Action Plan were distributed to the committee members. It was also suggested to invite the Valley Falls Fire and Cumberland Hill Fire Districts to our next meeting. Chairman LeBlanc said he would send those letters to the other two districts. Chairman Bacon will get information on the recent fire district merger in North Smithfield.**

**Commissioner Lindquist was appointed PIO to answer any questions by the “press”.**

**Commissioner Gannon asked about the advantages to merging with the CFD-**

**Chairman Bacon responded that-**

**1. The two districts Union Local contracts are closest in personnel and compensation packages as the CFD Local and NCFD Local were at one time, one local, and the individual contracts now, on many issues, mirror each other.**

**2. That the two districts have the largest common border than that of other town districts, and as an example, if there is an incident on I295, both districts respond.**

**Commissioner Gannon than stated that taxpayer education was important. Chairman LeBlanc agreed and thought we would need to list the “pro and cons” of a merger. He also suggested that the Districts be of one voice at the up-coming annual taxpayer meetings of both Districts on the 3rd Wednesday in June. Chief Walsh indicated he would draft an explanation of proposal for those meetings as we all agreed taxpayer approval to move forward in any merger investigation is necessary.**

**A brief discussion was held about the call force and how the merger would effect them-it was expressed that we would continue to need a call force but that there is concern that the numbers were dwindling in each district.**

**Proceeded to the formation of the Personnel and Finance Review Committees-**

**Finance-Chairman Bacon, Lt. Emerson, Tim Bergeron plus both Districts' treasurers**

**Personnel- Commissioners Lindquist, Gannon, Chief Walsh,  
Firefighter Bernado, Firefighter Jeff McCabe**

**Personnel Committee to meet Thursday, April 20th @ 7PM in Arnold  
Mills School House**

**Finance Committee meeting to be determined**

**Next Investigation Committee meeting, Thursday, April 27, 7 PM in the  
Arnold Mills School House**

**Meeting adjourned 8:20 PM**

**Respectively submitted-**

**Paul G. Lindquist**